

Christian Community

A Program Service of the Council for Social Action of the
Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.
and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the
Evangelical and Reformed Church, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio

Volume 4 No. 4

May, 1952

Lay Conference Looks at Daily Work

In a message written "by laymen for laymen," the North American Lay Conference on the Christian and His Daily Work, held at Buffalo, February 21 to 24, called attention to the importance of work as a Christian vocation. After confessing that "we have often worked without even trying to relate our work to God's will," it stressed integrity, working with a sense of God's presence, "making the most of our talents," recognizing the dignity of the worker, and "working as brothers."

There were a number of outstanding addresses by Dr. Reinold Von Thadden of the German Evangelical Church Congress, by Professor Robert L. Calhoun on "The Christian Meaning of Work," and by Mr. J. Irwin Miller, president and director of the Cummins Engine Company of Columbus, Indiana, and others.

One of the most provocative was the presentation by Jerry Voorhis, executive secretary of the Cooperative League of the U. S. A., on the vocational responsibilities faced by people in public life. Without apologizing for his use of the term, he stated: "The central purpose of the Christian politician must be to create an environment in which there will be maximum opportunity for the development of Christian character and maximum encouragement to the growth of Christian relationships among people in groups . . . What is desperately needed is more *practicing* Christians in places of public trust, who give their first allegiance to Christ and His Gospel." While setting forth concretely the responsibilities of both officials on the policy level and public servants in the non-policy categories, he stressed the equal obligation of the general public for the quality of the decisions and climate of public life.

Al Whitehouse, C.I.O. leader, was the genial chairman of the general sessions. But the real work of the conference was carried on in vocational and general discussion groups. The potential contribution in stimulating vocational



Jerry Voorhis, who warned the Buffalo Conference, that "We must use our freedom, not just to make speeches, but to solve problems."

Plan World Order Emphasis

The Commission on Christian Social Action has been authorized by the General Council of the Evangelical and Reformed Church to spearhead a United World Order Emphasis in the churches of the denomination during September and October, 1952. A poster calling attention to a four-point program "For Peace with Justice" has been mailed to pastors for display on church bulletin boards.

A Program Guide is in process of preparation, containing suggestions for group study and action. Every "E and R" congregation is urged to make its plans *now* for full participation during the Emphasis period.

self-examination in local churches and inter-church groups is great. If the opinions expressed by the representatives of our own denominations are any indication, we have a significant group of

Churches at Work In Social Action

This issue of *Christian Community* has been planned in response to a large number of requests for more news about what local churches are doing. A number of ministers and lay workers in both the Congregational Christian and the Evangelical and Reformed denominations were asked to assist us in getting the stories together, with such good effect that some of them will have to wait for the next issue.

From New England comes the report of a discussion and action group that discovered a movement to eliminate from a new school building the auditorium-gymnasium which had been originally voted and planned. One member offered \$5,000 toward the unit if others would match it, with the result that townspeople raised the funds and voted the necessary bond issue. When one of the opponents of the new school filed as a candidate for the state legislature members of the group persuaded a more capable and forward-looking citizen to run for the office.

In Hawaii, Congregationalists worked with the Maui Council of Churches to keep pari-mutuel betting out of the Territory. Under the direction of the social action committee of the Maui-Molokai-Lanai Association, the churches plan to study the tax structure with a view to securing a more equitable tax system in the Islands.

In many other communities in between, individuals, committees, and churches are working in unspectacular ways to bring the Christian spirit to bear upon the problems of society. That these reports may encourage our readers to further explorations is our earnest prayer.

laymen who want their local men's programs particularly to come to grips with the significant problems in the area of economic and vocational decisions.

Friends of Youth, Inc.

Imagination is being stirred, Christianity is beginning to live more effectively, in several churches in Seattle due to a social action project called Friends of Youth. It all started when a few lay members of University church met to decide what could be done to overcome or, better, to forestall juvenile delinquency.

After much discussion and advice from well-informed persons, there resulted a non-profit charitable corporation, open for membership to anyone agreeing with its policies, set up for three purposes:

(a) To find private homes willing to take foster children and give them real Christian care and guidance (temporary), or (in a few cases) adoption.

(b) To study legislation affecting children and youth, and to secure better laws.

(c) To establish and operate a Protestant group foster home.

In the eighteen months since the first handful of people met, we have worked out the set-up of the corporation, secured the backing of our own church, and have acquired as sponsors all our ten neighboring ministers, several down-town pastors, many civic leaders, and persons in children's welfare work. Six Protestant denominations are represented on the board of trustees.

Monthly meetings are held in various churches for elections, reports, discussion, and for making recommendations to the board of trustees who transact the real business of the corporation.

The actual placing of children, so far, has been done chiefly by the local Welfare Department, in homes found by Friends of Youth and its Foster Homes Committee. The advisability of becoming a Child Placement Agency is now being studied.

In order to insure that Friends of Youth, Inc., remains a *Christian* project, each trustee is required to take the Christian pledge upon assuming office. The same is required of caretakers in the future group home. There are no restrictions as to what children may be helped; in fact our by-laws specifically state "no discrimination as to race, color, or creed."

It has been our policy to "make haste slowly," consulting persons connected with operating agencies, e.g., the Child Welfare Section of the State Department of Social Security, the Juvenile Court, the Health and Welfare

agencies, and Associated Lutheran Welfare.

The need is great. Over three hundred children come to the attention of the Juvenile Court in our county alone every month. Half of these are not delinquent in any sense. They simply have no suitable home. In a day when we are told one child in every eight is not living with his parents, the Christian church has a job to do.

Iva L. Matson

When Teachers Strike

At the time of the public school teachers' strike in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1947, the Peoples Highland Park Congregational Church was fortunate in having a strong and active Social Action Committee. The teachers' strike possessed elements which are not involved in an industrial strike. It was difficult for people to adjust themselves to the idea that teachers would walk out of their classrooms, set up picket lines, and strike against the community schools.

Many of the members of the congregation were in sympathy with the teachers because of the low salaries, the deplorable teaching conditions due to inadequate buildings and facilities, and the seeming inadequacy of the city government to deal with the needs of the situation. Some of the members expressed their sympathy in walking the picket line and serving lunches to those on the picket line. Others were opposed to the idea. All were anxious as to the outcome.

The social action committee added to its members from those of the church who represented the various positions of thinking and attitude. A policy for bringing information, discussion, and action was discussed. Meetings of the congregation were held to discuss the problem and the relation of the church to it. Representatives were sent to meetings of the City Council and to meetings of the teachers.

It seemed best to the committee to send a resolution to the City Council favoring an early settlement of the strike, in which the conditions proposed by the teachers would be met. A meeting of the congregation was called and mimeographed copies of the proposed resolution were presented for discussion and action. The minister was asked to express his interpretation of the Christian principles involved and accepted whatever responsibilities were delegated by the meeting. A resolution was adopted which represented the thinking and convictions of the congregation,

and a plan of action was set up with responsibilities assigned to members of the congregation.

Jeffrey D. Hoy

A "Vast Army of Good-Will"

Out of a women's prayer group in Wilmette, Illinois, grew a proposal which met instant response throughout the country. In November, 1949, they were studying Margaret Bro's *More Than We Are* and asking themselves, "What can we do about the world's need?" They conferred with local and national leaders in the churches and peace movements. Articles by Frank Laubach, Alexander Klein, Stringfellow Barr and Granville Clark pointed toward aid to underdeveloped areas. A draft statement, widely distributed, brought helpful comments and was then published. Here, in part, is the proposal.

"We urge immediate legislation by our government enlisting volunteers of wide age range and experience in a Vast Army of Goodwill . . . for relief, reconstruction, and education in needy areas all over the world . . ."

This Goodwill Army might be financed . . . By unconditional gifts from the government, By Point Four funds . . . , Under the U. N. program of technical assistance; By some such plan as the Peace Bonds. . . ."

The suggestion was made that volunteers could be trained in church-related colleges and that such service might be considered satisfactory alternative service for conscientious objectors.

Enthusiastic responses came from Congressmen, Point Four Directors, businessmen, clergymen and from every state of the Union. It was used for discussion and for sermon material. A reprint edition was required by the demand. So encouraged were the women by the response that they have persistently followed up their effort with appeals and letters to persons in a position of influence in churches and in government programs. All this from one prayer circle in a local church.

Mary Cannon

BRIEF ITEMS

The Reverend Edward Hawley, Associate Pastor of the First Church in Oberlin (Ohio), reports that a recent meeting of its social action committee led to three actions: a commendation of

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 1)



International Relations

Letter

March 15, 1952.

Recommended

Americans as a whole have little sense of history. More than older peoples, we live in the present and the future. This characteristic has its defects as well as its obvious virtues. The roots of most of our current problems run deep into the past and cannot be understood without reference to their origins and development. All of us who want to help build an intelligent foreign policy need the perspective of U. S. foreign policy history. The Foreign Policy Association (22 East 38th Street, New York, New York) has just published a 62-page booklet entitled, "The Story of U. S. Foreign Policy." With vivid drawings, it is simply written and, so far as I can see, it is accurate. The author is Dexter Perkins, professor of history at the University of Rochester. James B. Conant adds an excellent essay on "Our Future in the Atomic Age." Order from the F.P.A., 35c.

You might send 70 cents and ask the F.P.A. to send you also the forthcoming issue of the *Headline Series* on "Africa: Focus of Unrest." Great things are stirring in "the dark continent!" Before long some understanding of their meaning will be urgently demanded of us.

Disarmament Commission At Work

The Paris meeting of the U. N. General Assembly dissolved the Atomic Energy Commission and recommended the dissolution of the Commission for Conventional Armaments, setting up in their places a new Disarmament Commission. It directed the Commission to begin work at once and to make its first report not later than June 1, 1952. The Assembly directed that a conference of all states shall be convened "as soon as the work of the Commission shall have progressed to a point where in the judgment of the Commission any part of its work is ready for submission to governments." The Commission is now at work in New York City. The Assembly action registers mounting anxiety among all people and a world-wide demand for relief from the burden and danger of the race in armaments. One gain may be noted. The distinction between conven-

tional armaments and atomic weapons has been discarded; the Commission will deal with all kinds of armament. Russia voted against the setting up of the Commission, under the directives adopted by the Assembly, but she will cooperate in the work of the Commission.

Information, Please

In how many churches is Point IV being studied? We know of a number but we suspect much more good work is being done than we have knowledge of. Please write to tell us what is being done in your church, or by your council

FLASH!

New "Mutual Security Program" legislation is now before Congress. If we do not speak up it is possible that the amount of economic aid, including Point IV funds, may be drastically cut. There is even talk of eliminating economic aid altogether.

Note that only \$656 million, or less than 10% of the total \$7.9 billion asked for foreign aid, is for economic and technical aid proper. Over 90% is for military purposes. Letters emphasizing the importance of this program as a constructive answer to the communist threat should be addressed to Senator Tom Connally, chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Hon. James P. Richards, chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Representatives as well as your Senators and Congressmen.

of churches to (1) spread information on the situation in the underdeveloped two-thirds of the world and (2) explain the Point IV program. Perhaps what you are doing could be used to stimulate other groups.

Japanese Uneasy

Christians in Japan are by no means happy about the provisions of the Treaty which provide for U. S. bases in that country. Leading Japanese newspapers are openly critical. It appears that not only are we to have military bases in their country but we are expecting Japanese industries to turn out armament supplies. What shall we say to those objectors? In particular, what might American Christians say to their

fellow Christians in Japan? We ought to let them know that we profoundly sympathize with their misgivings. We ought to say that we shall work against any inclination to think of Japan mainly as a military outpost of the U. S. (Our power is so great that we are tempted to be pretty casual about the hesitations of nations whose cooperation we need in building our ring of defense.) But it will not do much good to argue that it is wrong to ask the Japanese to do what a provision of their constitution forbids—a provision included on our insistence; or to warn that the military bases are an infringement of Japanese sovereignty.

The unescapable fact is that, so long as there is a real threat of aggression by communist countries, Japan needs us and we need Japan. A certain degree of pressure-control on the part of strong nations is, in the present situation, inevitable, no matter how much the ethical sense in the strong nation or the national sensitivity of the weaker nation may object to it. The only alternative is a system of internationally controlled collective security or a world political organization with power to enforce universal law. In other words, until an international body is created which can effectively protect both the weak and the strong, the stronger nations cannot be prevented from creating their own protective systems, even though this sometimes involves a degree of pressure, bordering on coercion, on those nations which can make a contribution to the strong nation's protective system. This is a hard fact to accept but it is a fact. In this case, it seems fairly clear that, while our central motive is the protection of the U. S., the security of Japan is also involved. The desire to stand apart from the struggle, not to be deeply involved on either side, is understandable—and we must make real effort to understand it!—but it is also essentially inadmissible. Lacking an effective international authority, the U. S. is compelled by the facts to take the lead in evolving a program for the defense of the free nations and to use a considerable degree of pressure to put the program into action.

Training for Point IV Careers

The Technical Cooperation Administration needs Point IV technicians for Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. Not only does it need them but there is, in both the U. S. and the U. N. technical aid programs, more money than can at the moment be used *because not enough qualified field*

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 1)

Brief Items

(Continued from Page 2)

the local school board for increasing community recreational opportunities and thwarting the threat of a segregated pattern of recreation; public support from the pulpit of a county tax levy for welfare agencies; and a protest against the appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican.

The Reverend Edward W. Brueseke, pastor of Zion Evangelical and Reformed Church, South Bend, Indiana, was one of many pastors who lent his weight to the fight against Universal Military Training. In addition to a cogent statement in *The Zion Visitor*, he participated in a round table discussion over the local radio station WHOT . . . Zion's Board of Christian Education sponsored a series of Sunday evening forums on the *Protestant Answer* to "The Roman Catholic Bid for Secular Power," "Secularization in Public Education," "Labor-Management Tension," and "Racial Prejudice and Discrimination."

Though not as highly publicized as the Cicero riots, Oak Park, Illinois, has been the scene of a number of unpleasant incidents involving Dr. Percy Julian, noted Negro chemist, who has made his home in the suburb. The Social Action Committee of the First Congregational Church, represented by Mrs. Robert Chapman, has taken a prominent part in the organization of a community human relations council. Dr. Fred Hoskins, pastor of the church, precipitated something of a controversy when he headed a long list of signers to a public apology to Dr. Julian for the hooliganism that has marred his residency there.

International Relations

(Continued from Page 3)

workers are available. In the churches we have been asking government to appropriate larger sums of money for Point IV. Now government is asking us to help find personnel! Your church can help. There may be a qualified person in your community. Since there is not room in this letter to give you the details, we suggest you write to Mr. William W. Young, Technical Cooperation Administration, State Department, Washington, for information on the kinds of workers needed for foreign service under Point IV. Mr. Young will send you complete information.

Herman F. Reissig.

Toward a More Effective Social Witness

Christian Community is pleased to announce and recommend the following opportunities for the training and enrichment of lay leaders and ministers in rendering more effective service to the church and the community.

Workshop on the City Church, May 5-9, Zion Church, St. Louis, Mo., sponsored by Commission on Christian Social Action and Board of National Missions of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Registration \$5, room and meals extra. Information from Board of National Missions, 1720 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis 3, Mo.

Presbyterian Institute of Industrial Relations, May 5-23, McCormick Theological Seminary, 2330 North Halsted, Chicago, Illinois. Information from Dean Marshall L. Scott.

Summer Institute for Social Progress, June 28 to July 12, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N. Y. Information from Director Dorothy P. Hill, Wellesley College, 14 West Elm Ave., Wollaston 70, Mass.

School on the Church and Economic Life, University of Chicago, July 7-28. Information from Dean Victor Obenhaus, 5757 University Ave., Chicago 37, Illinois.

Summer School of Alcohol Studies, July 7 to August 1, Yale University. Tuition for clergymen, \$250. Scholarships available. Information and application blanks from your social action office.

Northfield Conference of Religious Education, July 15 to 24, Northfield, Mass. Information from Connecticut or Massachusetts Council of Churches (210 Pearl St., Hartford 3; 14 Beacon St., Boston 8).

School for Social Action, Framingham, Mass., July 14 to 19, sponsored by Council for Social Action in cooperation with the Massachusetts Congregational Conference. For ministers and laymen. Tuition \$20. Information from Rev. Ray Gibbons, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10.

School for Social Action, July 21 to 26, Judson Collins Memorial Camp, Wampers Lake, near Jackson, Michigan. Sponsored by Council for Social Action in cooperation with Michigan Council of Churches. Tuition \$20. Information from Rev. Ray Gibbons.

Institute on Racial and Cultural Relations. Lincoln University, Pa., July 21-25. Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Missouri, August 4 to 8. Reed College, Portland, Oregon, August 25 to 29. Information from Rev. Galen Weaver, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10; or the Reverend Jefferson P. Rogers, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

Conference of Synodical Social Action Committee Chairmen, sponsored by the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, Dunkirk Conference Grounds, Dunkirk, N. Y., September 2-3. Information from Commission office.

Study Tour Planned

From October 13 to 28, a caravan of autos will move from New York City and the United Nations to a mining community in West Virginia, with stops enroute at a migratory camp in New Jersey, Washington, D. C., Richmond, Va., points in North Carolina, and Knoxville. The guiding theme is "Human Rights," in harmony with the home missions study theme 1952-53 — "Home Missions and Human Rights." The program is being set up by Galen Weaver, who will be the manager of the study tour. Each auto owner-driver will be paid two cents a mile by his guest passengers. There will be 24 to 28 persons in all, and only four will ride in each car. The average cost, it is estimated, will be approximately \$150 for board, room, and travel. Inquiries should be addressed to Galen R. Weaver, 287 Fourth Ave., New York 10, New York.

Rebirth in Roxbury

A new visual tool for a more inclusive churchmanship is ready after many unanticipated difficulties and delays. It is a 20-minute film strip with recorded commentary, entitled *Rebirth*

in Roxbury. What people who have seen and heard it like best is the fact that it is a true story of an actual process whereby an old and proud church—Eliot Congregational in Boston—has met the opportunity to serve its constituency, which now is Negro American as well as white American. Loaned free from Conference offices or the Visual Aids Department, the set sells for \$5.00 to Congregational Christian Churches. A discussion guide is sent with the film strip. Especially helpful to officers and members of churches in similar transitional urban areas, it will interest others also who wish to deal with the problems of color segregation. The direct and human way the story is written and narrated will appeal to people.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Additional copies may be obtained for 2 cents each. Requests from Congregational Christians should be addressed to Ray Gibbons, Director, Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York. Requests by Evangelical and Reformed, and others, as well as news items and communications, should be addressed to the Editor, Huber F. Klemme, Commission on Christian Social Action, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio.